

REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The Examiner is also thanked for the courtesies extended during the personal interview conducted on August 6, 2003. The office action dated April 25, 2003 has been received and its contents carefully reviewed.

Claims 13-18, 20-24, 26 and 27 are hereby amended and are currently pending. Claims 24-25, 18, 20, 22-24, and 27 have been amended for the sole purpose of correcting typographical errors. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims is respectfully requested.

In the Summary of the Action, it is noted that claims 16-17 and 26 are objected to at item 7, but the check box is not checked. However, there is no rejection of these claims in the substantive action. Applicants therefore assume these claims to be allowable and amend them to be in independent form.

In the Office Action, claims 13-15, 18, 21-24 and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicants' Related Art (Figs. 1A and 1B) (hereinafter "Related Art") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,621,701 to Yamaji et al. (hereinafter "Yamaji").

The rejection of claims 13-15, 18, 21-24 and 27 is respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested. Applicants hereby amend claim 13 to recite "treating at least part of the first layer with plasma containing hydrogen to form an intermediate layer having an O-H bonding structure." Applicants submit that support for this limitation can be found in the specification at at least page 7, line 27 to page 8, line 2 and page 9, lines 7-9. Claims 13-15 and 18 are allowable over the cited references in that each of these claims recites a combination of elements including, for example, "treating at least part of the first layer with plasma containing hydrogen to form an intermediate layer having an O-H bonding structure." None of the cited references including the Related Art and Yamaji, singly or in combination, teaches or suggests at least this feature of the claimed invention. The structure of independent claim 13 of the present application is different from the Yamaji structure in that the teaching of Yamaji regarding plasma treatment is limited to plasma treatment of an inorganic material to produce an Si-H bond structure for improved water permeation blocking performance. However, at least claim 1 of the present application recites treating an organic layer. Moreover, the hydrogen plasma

treatment of the first layer (organic material) of at least claim 13 serves to provide an O-H bonding structure. Applicants submit that there is no motivation in Yamaji to combine its teaching with the Related Art of the present application. That is, Applicants submit that nothing in the Related Art would motivate one of skill in the art to look the teachings of Yamaji regarding blocking water permeation (or vice versa) to arrive at the present invention. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 13 and claims 14-15 and 18, which depend from claim 13, are allowable over the cited references

Applicants hereby amend claim 21 to recite "treating at least a portion of the organic layer with plasma containing hydrogen to provide an intermediate layer having an O-H bonding structure." Applicants submit that support for this limitation can be found in the specification at at least page 7, line 27 to page 8, line 2 and page 9, lines 7-9. Claims 21-24 and 27 are allowable over the cited references in that each of these claims recites a combination of elements including, for example, "treating at least a portion of the organic layer with plasma containing hydrogen to provide an intermediate layer having an O-H bonding structure." None of the cited references including the Related Art and Yamaji, singly or in combination, teaches or suggests at least this feature of the claimed invention. The structure of independent claim 21 of the present application is different from the Yamaji structure in that the teaching of Yamaji regarding plasma treatment is limited to plasma treatment of an inorganic material for improved water permeation blocking performance. However, at least claim 1 of the present application recites treating an organic layer. Moreover, the hydrogen plasma treatment of the first layer (organic material) of at least claim 21 serves to an O-H bonding structure. Applicants submit that there is no motivation in Yamaji to combine its teaching with the Related Art of the present application. That is, Applicants submit that nothing in the Related Art would motivate one of skill in the art to look the teachings of Yamaji regarding blocking water permeation (or vice versa) to arrive at the present invention. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 21 and claims 22-24 and 27, which depend from claim 24, are allowable over the cited references.

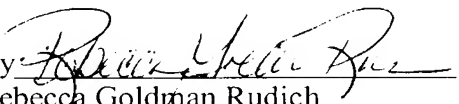
Applicants believe the foregoing amendments place the application in condition for allowance and early, favorable action is respectfully solicited. In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911.

Dated: August 15, 2003

Respectfully submitted,

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